Grace Glenn.

Miss Helen A. Temple.

from her friend

B. Franklin Palmer

March 31. 1853.

GRAY'S ELEGY

"His nomination for the Presidency in 1860, however, made the publication of his life a necessity, and attracted to Springfield an army of campaign biographers and newspaper men... While he was easy to approach and equally courteous to all, yet, as he said to me one evening after a long day of hand-shaking, he could not understand why people should make so much over him.

"Among the earliest newspaper me to arrive in Springfield after the Chicago convention was the late J. L. Scripps of the Chicago Tribune, who proposed to prepare a history of his life. Mr. Lincoln deprecated the idea of writing even a campaign biography. 'Why, Scripps,' said he, ' it is a great piece of folly to attempt to make anything out of me or my early life. It can all be condensed into.. a single sentence, and that sentence you will find in Gray's Elegy.

"The short and simple annals of the poor.' That's my life, and that's all you or any one else can make out of it.'"

(See Herndon's Lincoln, pages 1 and 2).

H. E. Barker

ELEGY

Written in

A Country Church-Yard.

By Thomas Gray.

With Thirty-Three Illustrations, Engraved on Wood,

By W. S. Gilbert.

Philadelphia:
George S. Appleton, 164 Chestnut Street.
New York:
D Appleton and Co., 200 Broadway.
1851.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
The Institute of Museum and Library Services through an Indiana State Library LSTA Grant

http://www.archive.org/details/elegywritteninco00cgray

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, Esq.

THIS

ILLUSTRATED EDITION

OF

GRAY'S ELEGY

IS DEDICATED

WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT

Illustrations.

ENGRAVED BY R. S. GILBERT, PHILADELPHIA.

STANZAS.	PAINTERS.
I.	G. Barret.
II.	Copley Fielding.
III.	J. Constable, R. A.
IV.	G. Cattermole.
V.	J. Constable, R. A.
VI.	T. Stothard, R. A.
VII.	P. Dewint.
VIII.	W. Boxall.
IX.	S. A. Hart, A. R. A.
X.	G. Cattermole.
XI.	J. Constable, R. A.
XII.	Thomas Landseer.
XIII.	Frank Howard.
XIV.	W. Westall, A. R. A.
XV.	A. W. Callcott, R. A.
XVI.	J. H. Nixon.
XVII.	A. Cooper, R. A.
XVIII.	W. Mulready, R. A.
XIX.	J. W. Wright.
XX.	Charles Landseer.
XXI.	J. J. Chalon, A. R. A
XXII.	H. Howard, R. A.
XXIII.	R. Westall, R. A.
XXIV.	J. W. Wright.
XXV.	Copley Fielding.
XXVI.	G. Barret.
XXVII.	Thales Fielding.
XXVIII.	C. R. Stanley.
XXIX.	W. Collins, R. A.
XXX.	Frank Howard.
XXXI.	H. Howard, R. A.
XXXII.	S. A. Hart, A. R. A.

The vignette on the title-page is a view of Stoke-Poges church, Buckinghamshire, the church-yard of which is the scene of this celebrated poem, and near which is a monument erected to the memory of Gray by the late John Penn, Esq., of Stoke Park. The drawing, by John Constable, Esq., R. A., has been kindly offered to the editor since the publication of the former edition, and is in the possession of Samuel Rogers, Esq.

The tomb of the Poet is at the south-east corner of the chancel, near that of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Antrobus.

THE great improvement that has taken place, within a few years, in the art of Engraving on Wood, as well as its general adoption, in some measure superseding the use of Copper and Steel, led to the present attempt to apply this mode of embellishment to a Poem of such general and deserved celebrity, and which appeared to afford the greatest scope for the talents of the artist.

The ELEGY itself has long been universally acknowledged as one of the most elegant compositions which the English language ever produced.

The following testimony to its great merit is not, perhaps, generally known, and will not here be inappropriately introduced.

General Wolfe received a copy on the eve of the assault on Quebec; he was so struck with its beauty, that he is said to have exclaimed, that he would have preferred being its author, to that of being the victor in the projected attack in which he so gloriously lost his life.

The favour with which this edition may be received, will be entirely owing to the talents of the eminent artists who have so kindly seconded the Editor, if he may apply such a word, in his wish to produce a specimen of beautiful and appropriate illustration in this branch of the Fine Arts; and to them he begs to return his sincerest thanks.

JOHN MARTIN.

London,
Oct. 10th. 1831

E

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day:
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping Owl does to the Moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

EV

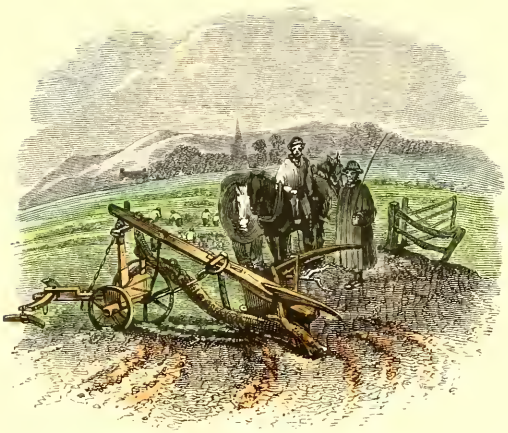
Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

V

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

VI

For them, no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share.

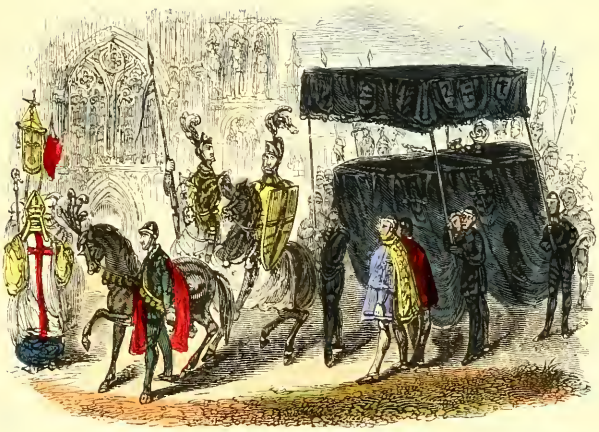


VII.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team a-field!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

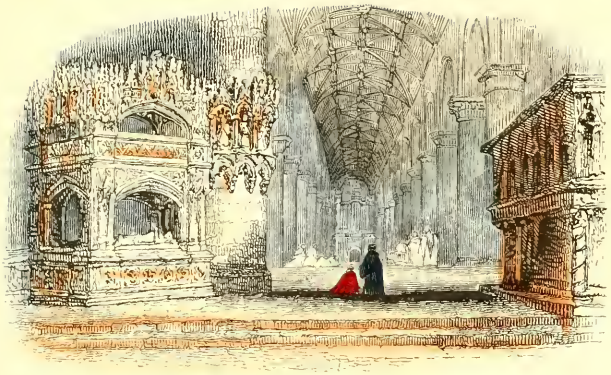
VIII

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.



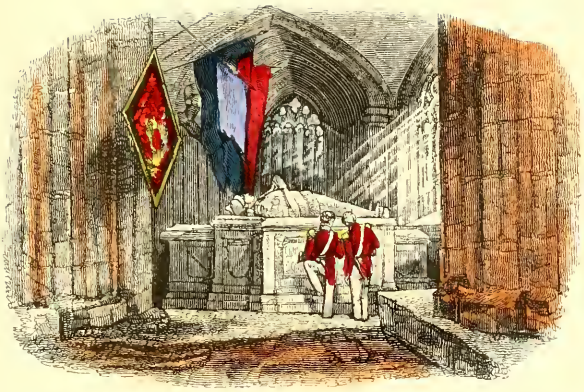
EN

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth, e'er gave,
Await, alike, th' inevitable hour;—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.



X

Nor you, ye proud! impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise;
Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.



XE

Can storied urn, or animated bust,

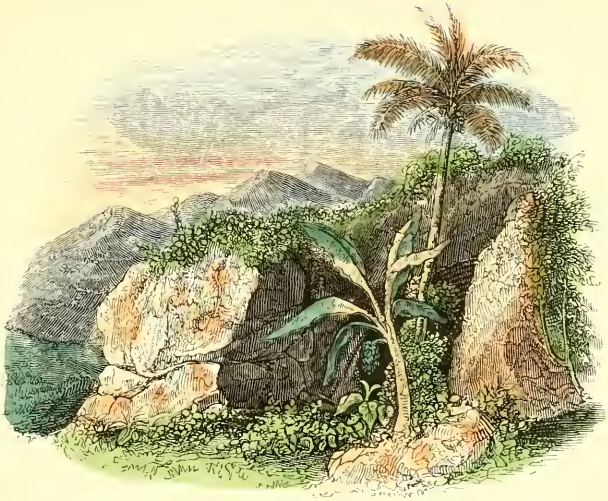
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?

Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust?

Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps, in this neglected spot, is laid
Some heart, once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge, to their eyes, her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.



XLV

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear ;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

xv

Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast.
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute, inglorious Milton,—here may rest;
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command ;
The threats of pain and ruin to despise ;
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

NYEE

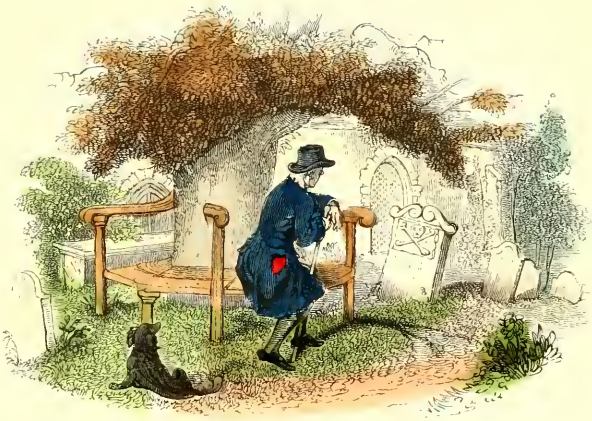
Their lot forbad: nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

XVIII

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide;
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame;
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride,
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

NEN

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool, sequester'd vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.



XX

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

XXI

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

XXII.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resign'd;
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

XXXIII

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries;
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

XXXV

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If, 'chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate;

XXV

Haply, some hoary-headed swain may say:

"Oft have we seen him, at the peep of dawn,

Brushing, with hasty steps, the dews away,

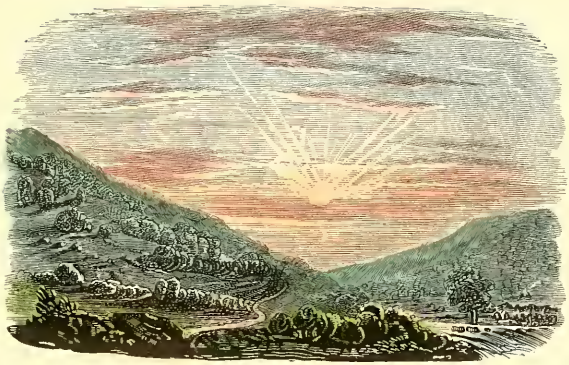
To meet the Sun upon the upland lawn.

XXVI

"There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length, at noontide, would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

XXVII.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling, as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful, wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.



XXVIII.

" One morn, I miss'd him on the 'custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came,—nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he;

XXXV

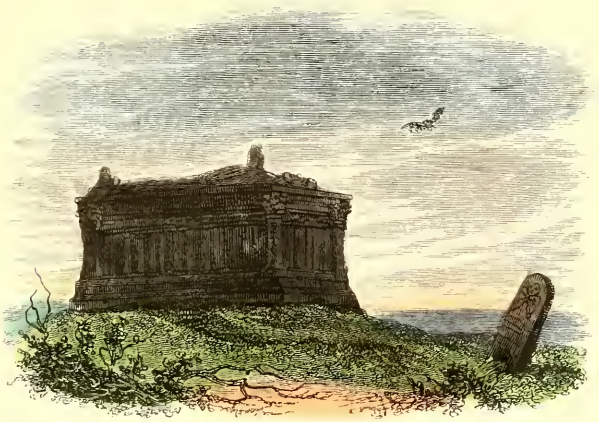
"The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

XXX

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

XXXI

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had—a tear;
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.



XXXII

No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode:
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

71.2009.084.00606

Gray's Elegy